

In the Claims:

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1. (twice amended) A jewelry clasp for gripping the post of a piece of jewelry, said jewelry clasp comprising:

a base plate having a first surface for facing toward said piece of jewelry and a second surface for facing away from said piece of jewelry, an opening in said base plate for passing a jewelry post therethrough;

a pair of [at least one] spring fingers [finger] extending outwardly from said base plate second surface, said fingers extending on opposed ends of said base plate, to a position where a portion of the spring fingers [finger] can each frictionally engage a side surface of a jewelry post when said post is passed through said opening; and

a pair of [at least one] user gripping tabs [tab], said tabs having a first end attached to said base plate, and a second end capable of being gripped, said second end extending entirely outwardly from said base plate second surface, said second end being substantially in-line with said first end, said tabs extending on opposed ends of said base plate, offset ninety degrees from said fingers, to a position where said tabs [tab] can be gripped [by user] for removal of said jewelry clasp from said post, said tabs having an inward bend to facilitate gripping and removal or replacement of said clasp on the post.

2. (amended) The jewelry clasp of claim 1 in which said base plate is substantially circular [and said at least one

spring finger is a pair of spring fingers extending substantially from the twelve o'clock and six o'clock positions thereon and said at least one gripping tab is a pair of gripping tabs extending substantially from the three o'clock and nine o'clock positions thereon].

3. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 2 in which said pair of gripping tabs extends farther outward than said spring fingers.

4. (amended) The jewelry clasp of claim 2 in which at least one of said pair of gripping tabs being different in [has a greater] width than either of said spring fingers.

b1 5. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 2 in which said gripping tabs have a non-smooth outer surface to facilitate gripping thereof.

6. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 5 in which said non-smooth surface is at least one dimple.

7. (amended) The jewelry clasp of claim 2 in which at least one of said gripping tabs is a [substantially U] shaped piece of stiff wire secured to said base plate.

8. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 2 in which the opening in said circular base plate is centrally located and said base plate first surface has a funnel shaped depressed area around said opening to facilitate entry of a jewelry post into said opening.

9. (amended) A clasp for gripping a post extending from

the back of a piece of jewelry, said clasp comprising:

a generally circular base plate having a first surface for facing toward said piece of jewelry and a second surface for facing away from said piece of jewelry, a centrally located opening in said base plate for passing a jewelry post therethrough[,];

a pair of opposed spring fingers on said second surface, extending from opposed ends of said second surface, positioned to frictionally engage opposed sides of a jewelry post when said post is passed through said opening[,]; and

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a pair of opposed user gripping tabs extending from opposed ends of said second surface, said tabs extending entirely outwardly from said second surface, and said tabs being offset by ninety degrees from said fingers, to a position where said tabs can be gripped by a user for removal of said clasp from said jewelry post, said tabs being [spaced away from said spring fingers, and being wider and] longer than said spring fingers.

10. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 1 including at least one earring stabilizer extending radially outward from said base plate.

11. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 10 in which said earring stabilizer includes first and second generally parallel extension bars and a stabilizing member connected to at least one of said first and second extension bars.

12. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 11 in which said first and second extension bars project radially outward from said base plate at a position adjacent one of said gripping tabs.

13. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 11 in which said first and second extension bars are secured to said base plate by solder or stamped as one piece.

14. (original) The jewelry clasp of claim 9 including at least one earring stabilizer extending radially outward from said base plate.

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15. (amended previously) The jewelry clasp of claim 14 in which said earring stabilizer includes first and second generally parallel extension bars and a stabilizing member connected to at least one of said first and second extension bars.

16. (amended) The jewelry clasp of claim 15 in which said first and second extension bars of said earring stabilizers project radially outward from said base plate at a position adjacent to one of said gripping tabs.

17. (amended) The jewelry clasp of claim 15 in which said first and second exterior bars of said earring stabilizers are secured to said base plate by solder.

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